

Message Text

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10

ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 IO-13 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 OMB-01 RSR-01 /119 W

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R 242148Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7602

INFO USMISSION USUN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY LIMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 6288

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, OPANAL, XM, PN

SUBJECT: OPANAL: TREATMENT OF PANAMA CANAL ISSUE.

REF: MEXICO 6144 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: PANAMA CANAL ZONE ISSUE WAS RAISED DURING AUGUST 23 PLENARY SESSION OF OPANAL GENERAL CONFERENCE (REFTEL). NO SPECIFIC RESOLUTION WAS INTRODUCED, ALTHOUGH LOCAL PERUVIAN AMBASSADOR TOOK PAINS TO POINT OUT THAT APPROVAL OF DIRECTING COUNCIL REPORT IMPLIED AGREEMENT THAT THAT BODY REMAINS SEIZED OF ISSUE. PANAMANIAN STATEMENT, WHILE PREDICTABLY UNDERLINING GOP, POSITION ON QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY, WAS RELATIVELY INOFFENSIVE. END SUMMARY.

1. AS ANTICIPATED, ISSUE OF PANAMA'S ALLEGED INABILITY FULLY TO COMPLY WITH ARTICLE 14 OF TREATY OF TLATELOLCO (WHICH REQUIRES SEMI-ANNUAL NEGATIVE REPORTS CONCERNING PROHIBITED ACTIVITY) CAME UP DURING OPANAL GENERAL CONFERENCE. IN INTRODUCING DISCUSSION OF ARTICLE 14 COMPLIANCE IN PLENARY SESSION, SECRETARY GENERAL GROS ESPIELL REPORTED THAT, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH PANAMANIAN DELEGATION, HE RECOMMENDED DEFERRING DEBATE ON PANAMANIAN
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INITIATIVE UNTIL DISCUSSION OF DIRECTING COUNCIL REPORT LATE ON

IN AGENDA. CONFERENCE AGREED.

2. WHEN DIRECTING COUNCIL'S REPORT LATER DISCUSSED, PERU'S VOLUBLE AMBASSADOR BENAVIDES CORREA, WHOSE COLORFUL INTERVENTIONS EASILY FILLED MORE THAN HALF OF ALL PLENARY DEBATE, TOOK THE FLOOR TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC POINTS RAISED IN PANAMAIAN NOTE AND USG RESPONSE. AS USUAL, BENAVIDES' EMOTION EXCEEDED HIS KNOWLEDGE; FOR EXAMPLE, HE MADE UNFOUNDED ALLEGATIONS THAT US HAS CONDUCTED WITHIN CANAL ZONE ACTIVITIES PROHIBITED UNDER CHARTER. ALTHOUGH SOME DELEGATES PRESENT VICARIOUSLY MAY HAVE ENJOYED BENAVIDES' ATTACK, NONE DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED THEMSELVES WITH HIS EXCESS. SYG GROS ESPIELL NODDED VIGOROUS ASSENT AT SEVERAL POINTS DURING THIS HARANGUE BUT DID NOT OTHERWISE SPEAK. DEPUTY SECGEN GONZALEZ DE LEON PASSED EMBREP NOTE STATING THAT SHOULD PERUVIAN GET CARRIED AWAY TO POINT OF SPEAKING OF INSPECTION, PANAMANIAN WOULD CLARIFY POINT THAT GOP HAD NOT MADE SUCH A REQUEST. FORTUNATLY, BENAVIDES STOPPED SHORT OF THAT SUGGESTION.

3. IN HIS PREPARED STATEMENT (COPY OF WHICH PROVIDED TO EMBREP IMMEDIATELY AFTER DELIVERY THROUGH COURTESY OF PANAMANIAN DELEGATION) QUIROS GUARDIA BRIEFLY TRACED HISTORY OF GOP INITIATIVE AND US RESPONSE. HE THEN STATED THAT "GOP INFERS THAT USG, IN CONFORMANCE WITH COMMITMENTS AGREED TO UPON RATIFICATION ... OF ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL II OF TREATY OF TLAHELCO, HAS RESPECTED (PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 1 AND 2 OF THAT PROTOCOL)". LATER IN HIS STATEMENT, PANAMANIAN REPRESENTATIVE STATED THAT VALIDITY OF THIS INTERPRETATION WAS "FOUNDED ON FACT THAT SOVEREIGNTY OVER SO-CALLED CANAL ZONE HAS NEVER BEEN TRANSFERRED BY PANAMA." IN CLOSING, HE NOTED THAT GOP RESERVES RIGHT TO RAISE ISSUE AGAINST EITHER WITHIN OPANAL "OR ANY OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORUM"

4. TEXT OF PANAMANIAN STATEMENT BEING FURNISHED TO ADDRESSEES.
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